

STATINTL

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Missile 'Gap' Never Existed, Dulles Says

Ex-CIA Chief Confirms Wrong Guesses on Soviet Arms Strategy Caused Confusion

Los Angeles Times News Service

NEW YORK—Allen W. Dulles, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, confirmed Wednesday that fears in the late 1950s of a missile or bomber "gap" favoring the Soviet Union were based on incorrect U.S. intelligence estimates.

Such a gap, writes Dulles in the April issue of Harper's Magazine, never really existed. The U.S. assessment was based on what Dulles called an incorrect guess as to Soviet intentions. He denied that intelligence "failures" led to a wrong American judgment.

(Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara last year also denied that there had ever been a missile gap. In the 1960 Presidential campaign Democrats charged that Eisenhower administration policies had caused the United States to fall behind in the missile race.)

Speculation Devoiled

Speculation and public rumormongering about a missile gap, writes Dulles, developed because the Defense Department put "great pressure" on the CIA to evaluate reports of a Russian missile buildup. "Early figures of Soviet missile production had to be developed on the basis of estimated production and development capabilities over a period in the future."

Based on certain projections of capabilities of the Soviets (in the early post-Sputnik period) and on our view of their intentions and overall strategy, estimates were made as to the number of missiles and nuclear warheads which would be available and on launchers several years in the future.

ture of the subversive activities in which the various Communist parties are engaged and the large numbers of untrained personnel involved, it is difficult for them to maintain adequate security and secrecy.

"The funds for CIA's operation are . . . known to the

chose the more orderly program. As soon as this evidence appeared, the ICBM estimates . . . were quickly revised downward." The same was true, notes Dulles, of the apparent Soviet decision in 1957 to cut back on heavy-bomber production. Earlier the CIA had estimated—incorrectly, as it turned out—that the Russians would push heavy-bomber building.

Other Comments

Dulles' magazine article—"The Craft of Intelligence"—reviews the role of intelligence throughout history. In the article he makes these other statements:

"Some of the most important, also some of the most recent Soviet defectors to the West have so far chosen not to be 'surfaced' (i.e., publicly identified). Their defections and their identities have remained secret; but they have made, and are making, a continual contribution to our inside knowledge of the work of the Soviet intelligence and security apparatus."

Budget a Secret

"Many Communist parties and front organizations throughout the world have been penetrated (by U.S. or free world intelligence agents). Because of the na-

A Tough Guess

The CIA had to estimate, writes Dulles, whether the Russians would go ahead with quantity production of their early, awkward intercontinental missiles or whether they would proceed slowly on a more "orderly" program, concentrating on building better missiles.

"The answer, in retrospect, seems to be that they

relevant subcommittees of the appropriations committees of the Congress." Dulles headed the CIA for eight years, until 1962. "I see little excuse for peacetime spying on our friends or allies . . . But the answer to the question of the need for intelligence, particularly on the Communist bloc, is that we are not really at peace with them, and we have not been since communism declared its own war on our system of government and of life."